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Youth Night '04 rocks Miss. Coliseum

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

A standing-room-only crowd of 9,500 people showed up on the evening of July 23 for Mississippi Baptist Youth Night 2004, the largest annual gathering of Mississippi Baptists anywhere in the state.

"We were full, even with the added bleachers this year," said Don Lum, chairman of the committee that planned the event and consultant in the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Sunday School Department. "I was very pleased with the attendance and how our young people conducted themselves."

The speaker for 2004 Youth Night was Al Meredith, pastor since 1987 of Wedgwood Church in Fort Worth.

During a See You At the Pole rally at Meredith's church on September 15, 1999, a deranged gunman entered the church and fired more than 100

rounds from various firearms into the crowd of 400 young worshippers and their adult leaders. A total of seven people were killed and 14 people were injured before the gunman took his own life in the balcony of the church's sanctuary.

Meredith spoke to Youth Night participants about the importance of accepting the worth of every person and welcoming everyone into the fellowship of Christians.

Lum said Meredith's message was on target for today's teens. "He was loud and clear that young people can be healing agents of God to friends and classmates who have

been rejected by the world and are hurting.

"That's a powerful message that young people need to hear as they prepare for the beginning of a new school year in a few weeks. They need to realize that they can point a hurting generation toward God and be a positive influence in their schools."

Jake Gullledge and the worship band from Chestnut Mountain Church in Gainesville, Ga., who also headlined the Youth Night 2003, provided worship through music.

Lum said he was appreciative of the youth ministers, pastors, and volunteers who made the effort to get their young people to Youth Night. "Some folks drove over four hours to get there," he pointed out.

Members of the Youth Night 2004 planning committee who served with Lum included:

- Hal Clark, minister to students at Sylva Rena Church, Water Valley.
- Jon Cooper, minister to students at First Church, Amory.



IN PRAISE — Jake Gullledge (center) and members of his worship band from Chestnut Mountain Church in Gainesville, Ga., lead worship at the 2004 Mississippi Baptist Youth Night July 23 in the Mississippi Coliseum in Jackson. Youth Night, now in its fourth decade, is the largest annual statewide gathering of Mississippi Baptists. (BR photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

• Fish Robinson, minister to students at North Oxford Church, Oxford.

• Gary Watts, minister to students at Wynndale Church, Terry.

• Lance Word, minister to students at Poplar Springs Drive Church, Meridian.

"I want to express my appreciation to the planning committee members. We couldn't have done it without them," Lum said.

Mississippi Baptist Youth Night is supported by gifts to the Mississippi Cooperative Program. Youth Night 2005 is scheduled for July 22 in the Mississippi Coliseum in Jackson.

For more information, contact Lum at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3280 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 280. E-mail: dlum@mbcb.org.

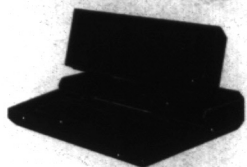


Meredith



PRAYER TIME — A group of young people who attended the 2004 Mississippi Baptist Youth Night July 23 in the Mississippi Coliseum take time to pray before leaving for home after the annual event adjourned. As many as 9,500 Mississippi Baptist youth and their sponsors attended Youth Night this year. (BR photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



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Perkins Jr.**
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Movie ratings: creeping up on our children

We may not have known what to call it, but many parents had suspicions that something was going on with so-called children's movies. As we carted our youngsters off to their favorite blockbuster flicks every summer and holiday season, we thought we detected an increasing volume of suggestive and downright bawdy scenes.

Filling Shrek 2 with flatulence didn't make it any funnier. The crotch joke in Spiderman 2 may have been clever but wasn't necessary and didn't add anything to the story line. It's hard to know where to start with The Cat in the Hat, a children's favorite Dr. Seuss tale, remade a few years ago into a ribald, modern tale filled with double entendres.

Over and over, parents sensed something was wrong. Now the Harvard School of Public Health (HSPH) has given it a name — ratings creep — and it turns out we parents weren't far off the mark with our concerns.

In a July 13 press release on a new HSPH study, researchers announced they had found a sizable increase in movies made since 1992 in the amount of actions and words considered inappropriate for children. "The findings demonstrate that ratings creep has occurred over the last decade and that today's movies contain significantly more violence, sex, and profanity than movies of the same rating a decade ago."

The researchers developed a database that included movie ratings and rating reasons obtained from the Motion Picture Association of America (www.MPAA.org) and information about movie content from two independent resources, Kids-in-Mind (www.kids-in-mind.com) and Screen It! (www.screenit.com).

They then assessed the relationship between movie ratings and content and

trends for films released between January 1, 1992 and December 31, 2003. The research bore out the troubling findings that:

- Violent content rose most in films rated PG and PG-13.

- Sexual content increased most in films rated PG, PG-13, and R.

- Profanity spiked most in films rated PG-13 and R.

- G-rated animated films had a significantly higher amount of violence than non-animated films of the same rating.

- A majority of the G-rated films surveyed had depictions of tobacco, alcohol, and/or drug use, and movies in general show such vices "often in ways that normalize or glamorize their use..."

Kimberly Thompson, associate professor in the Department of Health Policy and Management at HSPH and director of the Kids Risk Project (also at HSPH), said, "Parents and physicians should be aware that movies with the same rating can differ significantly in the amount and types of potentially objectionable content. Age-based ratings alone do not provide good information about the depiction of violence, sex, profanity, and other content, and the criteria for rating movies became less stringent over the last decade."

"The MPAA rating reasons provide important information about content, but they do not identify all types of content found in films and they may particularly miss the depiction of substances."

Movie goers and movie makers can quibble over the details of the report, but

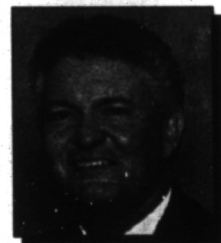


the facts are undeniable. Movies have become coarser over the past several decades, and the trend has picked up speed in the last ten years. Even G-and PG-rated kid's movies are getting much worse with the addition of adult material.

Ten years ago we may have asked ourselves, "How bad can it get?" Well, we're seeing now how bad it can get. It's hard to imagine how much worse movies (and television) will be in another ten years. We'll see, though.

In the meantime, don't be surprised if ratings creep breaks into a full gallop.

GUEST OPINION:



FMA—What Now?

By Jimmy Porter, Director
Miss. Baptist Christian Action Comm.
Jackson

which was passed with bipartisan support and President Bill Clinton's signature in 1996. The Hostettler bill (HR 3313) must wind its way through the legislative process, which will prove difficult without bipartisan support.

We support this bill, but a Federal Marriage Amendment is still needed. A future Congress could reverse Hostettler's bill. Also, the courts, which this bill is designed to restrict, can rule it unconstitutional. In fact, on July 20, a lawsuit for a lesbian couple "married" in Massachusetts was filed in federal court in Tampa, seeking legal recognition. Eight states — California, Florida, Indiana, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, and Washington — are currently in court defending their laws against

same-sex "marriage." Attorney Ellis Rubin, who filed the lawsuit in Florida, stated, "If Massachusetts recognizes same-gender marriages with all the legal rights, privileges, and immunities of different-sex marriages, Florida should be obliged to recognize the full scope of legal rights bestowed upon them under Massachusetts law" (Baptist Press, 07/22/04). He believes the Full Faith and Credit clause of the U.S. Constitution is sufficient to overturn the Defense of Marriage Act.

If this lawsuit is successful, the laws that 44 states have passed mean nothing. Eighty-eight percent of the states containing 86% of the population of the U.S. have passed laws protecting traditional marriage, yet many in Congress see no need for a Federal Marriage

Amendment. Without this protection, Mississippi may one day be forced to recognize same-sex marriages.

We must not let this issue die until the definition of marriage, "one man and one woman," is firmly entrenched in the U.S. Constitution. Pray for the coming election. Pray that supporters of a Federal Marriage Amendment will be elected to replace those who are opposed.

This fall voters in 11 states will have the chance to voice their opinion in the historic debate to protect marriage. The first two states to vote on a constitutional amendment defining marriage as "one man, one woman," will be Missouri and Louisiana; with Missouri voting on August 3 and Louisiana following on September 18. Nine additional states, including Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Utah, Montana, Oregon, and Michigan, will cast their vote on November 2.

Vote your Christian values and for those who stand for Biblical principles. Let's all work to pass the Mississippi Marriage Amendment which will be on the ballot November 2nd. Also, contact your senator and representative to thank them for supporting traditional marriage.

U.S. Congress decries Sudanese genocide

WASHINGTON (BP and local reports) — Genocide is taking place in Sudan in violation of international law, both houses of U.S. Congress declared in a joint resolution July 22.

The joint resolution declares that "the atrocities unfolding in Darfur, Sudan, are genocide" in violation of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, signed in Paris on Dec. 9, 1948.

The joint resolution cited the Paris accord as holding that "genocide, whether committed in time of peace or in time of war, is a crime under international law...." The resolution notes that "an estimated 30,000 innocent civilians have been brutally murdered, more than 130,000 people have been forced from their homes and have fled to neighboring Chad, and more than 1,000,000 people have been 'internally displaced' in the western region of Sudan known as Darfur."

The government of Sudan has been accused by U.S. officials, United Nations workers, and human rights advocates of orchestrating attacks by Arab militias known as "Janjaweed" against the African populace of the Darfur region.

Sudanese Christians appear to be a direct target of the oppression in many parts of the country. They have been executed, sold into slavery, and forced to flee their land and crops.

In addition to declaring the crisis in Sudan to be a case of genocide, Senate Concurrent Resolution 133:

- "deplores the failure of the United Nations Human Rights Commission to take appropriate action with respect to the crisis... particularly the failure by the Commission to support United States-sponsored efforts to strongly condemn gross

human rights violations committed in Darfur."

- "calls upon the United Nations and the United Nations Secretary General to assert lead-

State Colin Powell to Darfur in June 2004 to engage directly in efforts to end the genocide and the provision of nearly \$140,000,000 to date in bilateral



STRANDED — In the Sudanese refugee camps there are many more women, children, and elderly than there are men and older boys. One explanation is that men and boys were killed in the attacks on their villages. In other cases, the men have taken what animals they have left and taken them to pasture farther south. (BP photo courtesy of USHMM)

ership by calling the atrocities being committed in Darfur by their rightful name: genocide."

- "calls on the member states of the United Nations, particularly member states from the African Union, the Arab League, and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, to undertake measures to prevent the genocide... from escalating further, including the imposition of targeted means against those responsible for the atrocities."

- "commends the [Bush] Administration's leadership in seeking a peaceful resolution to the conflict... and in addressing the ensuing humanitarian crisis, including the visit of Secretary of

humanitarian assistance through the United States Agency for International Development."

- "commends the President for appointing former Senator John Danforth as Envoy for Peace in Sudan on September 6, 2001, and further commends the appointment of Senator Danforth as United States Ambassador to the United Nations."

- "calls on the Administration to continue to lead an international effort to stop [the] genocide."

- "calls on the Administration to impose targeted means, including visa bans and the freezing of assets, against officials and other individuals of the government of Sudan, as well as Janjaweed militia commanders, who are responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity."

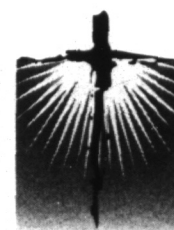
- "calls on the United States Agency for International Development to establish a Darfur Resettlement, Rehabilitation, and Reconstruction Fund so that those individuals driven off their land may return and begin to rebuild their communities."

According to the joint resolution's citation of the Paris accord, genocide and "conspiracy to commit genocide," "direct and public incitement to commit genocide," "attempt to commit genocide" and being "complicit in genocide" are punishable under international law.

The chief sponsor of the joint resolution in the Senate was Kansas Republican Sam Brownback; in the House, New Jersey Democrat Donald Payne.

The resolution was passed by Congress the same day that Secretary of State Colin Powell met with U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan at the U.N. headquarters in New York. Neither Powell nor Annan, who visited Sudan in June, used the word "genocide" in a joint news conference.

Since their visit with Sudanese officials in Khartoum, Powell said, "... we've seen some modest improvement in access,



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**THE
SECOND
FRONT PAGE**

Record

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Worshippers tossed

OSLO, Norway (BP) — Bulgarian police have forcibly expelled members of an alternative Orthodox synod from some 250 parish churches they have been using for more than 10 years, Forum 18 News Service reported July 23. Concern over the raids has extended beyond the Orthodox community, with Baptist pastor Theodor Angelov, general secretary of the European Baptist Federation, voicing support for the ousted Orthodox parishes. "We have full sympathy for our Orthodox brothers and sisters. This is a very difficult moment for all the churches and the whole population of Bulgaria," Angelov told Forum 18, an Internet news service focusing on persecuted Christians and other religious groups in the former Soviet Union and its satellite states. The police raids follow a long-standing split in the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, and a controversial religion law favoring one side in the split, according to Forum 18. Angelov condemned what he described as communist-style methods not seen in Bulgaria since the end of the communist period. "Using violence in a time that pretends to be democratic is unacceptable," the Baptist pastor said. Citing a failure to use proper judicial process, Angelov said, "The police arrived at churches across the country at 6 o'clock in the morning, sealing them, dragging out priests by force if they are inside and in some cases beating them — there's nothing legal in that." Human rights and religious freedom activists also condemned the forcible expulsion July 21 of members of the alternative synod from the estimated 250 churches they have been using since the Orthodox Church split in the early 1990s. "This is a brutal violation of the religious rights of Bulgarian priests and people," Emil Cohen, head of the Tolerance Foundation religious freedom group.

Looking back

10 years ago

Youth Night's attendance neared the 20,000 mark again as Baptist youth and their leaders from across the state poured into Memorial Stadium in Jackson on July 29. One hundred thirty professions of faith were recorded.

20 years ago

Larry Bright, Tylertown native and member of Pinelake Church, Rankin Association, is selected as organist for equestrian events at the Summer Olympics in Los Angeles. Horse fancier Bright brings 20 years of experience to his new job.

50 years ago

Ira Bright becomes dean of students at Blue Mountain College. She came to Blue Mountain in 1951 as hostess of Whitfield Resident Hall, and after two years was offered the position of alumnae secretary of the college.

Rally brings marriage campaign to Miss.

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

Supporters of traditional marriage from four states filled the Bancorp South Center in downtown Tupelo to near capacity on July 18 for a Rally for Traditional Marriage.

Mississippi's two Republican Senators, Thad Cochran and Trent Lott, voted in favor of invoking cloture and moving on to a vote on the amendment.

"Don't let anybody tell you God doesn't have anything to do with public policy," said Gary Bauer at the Tupelo rally.

Roger Wicker, Republican Congressman from Tupelo, told the crowd, "We're here tonight to fight for the American family. Step by step, there has been an erosion of traditional values and we're not going to stand for it any more."

Wicker, a member of First Church, Tupelo, said he has received more than 4,000 letters and posted over 20 telephone calls each day regarding the passage of FMA. "This is a time in America for Christian to speak out," he said.

"This is a spiritual fight. In our knowledge we are not smart enough to win on our own; we need God," said Bill Owens of Memphis, founder and president of the Coalition of African-American Pastors, whose goal is to support FMA.

Owens, who said he had lit cigarettes shoved into his neck during the civil rights movement in the 1960s, told attendees that he is offended at the pro-homosexual movement's use of the civil rights movement to further their cause.

"I marched for our rights. This is not a civil rights movement... The homosexual community has hijacked the civil rights movement," he pointed out.

Owens said the voices in favor of traditional marriage have a right to be heard in the halls of political power, where the fight for traditional marriage is taking place. "We're going to let our political leaders know that if you can't stand up for God, we won't stand up for you. It's time for Christians to stand up, no matter the cost," he said. Owens received an extended standing ovation.

"The church must speak up," Owens said. "If we don't, who will?"

Forrest Sheffield, pastor of Harrisburg Church, Tupelo, presented the meeting welcome. Bert Harper, pastor of West Jackson Street Church, Tupelo, presented concluding remarks.

Randy Wood, minister of music at First Church, Verona, directed the mass choir, and Robert Yarber, member of Harrisburg Church, sang a solo.

About a dozen pro-homosexual protesters picketed outside the Bancorp South Center during the rally, waving an American flag in the colors adopted by the homosexual movement and carrying signs promoting tolerance and acceptance. They did not attempt to disrupt the rally, and no confrontations were reported.



SUPPORTING MARRIAGE

The Bancorp South Center in downtown Tupelo was the site of a July 18 Rally for Traditional Marriage that cut across racial and denominational lines to promote the concept of marriage as only between one man and one woman. With a handful of pro-homosexual protesters marching outside, participants heard addresses from family values leader Gary Bauer, Mississippi Congressman Roger Wicker, and traditional marriage supporter Pastor Bill Owens. (BR photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

Organizers, who reported over 70 churches cancelled Sunday evening services to attend the rally, estimated over 6,000 people were in attendance to hear speakers extol the importance of maintaining the definition of marriage — one man and one woman — and plead with participants to get involved in the fight to save traditional marriage.

The rally came on the heels of the U.S. Senate's failure to close debate on the Federal Marriage Amendment (FMA) and move forward with a vote. Without a two-thirds tally on the attempt with invoke cloture and thereby head off threatened filibusters, the effort to pass the amendment in the Senate was killed.

"We lost a battle last week (to pass FMA in the Senate) but we didn't lose the war. We are going to take this country back and we are going to win this war."

Bauer, best known as the former president of the Family Research Council in Washington, D.C., is currently serving as president of American Values, a non-profit organization that supports conservative issues.

Bauer cautioned those in attendance not to take victory for granted in the 30-year culture war for the heart and soul of America. "Someone will win this war, and to the winner goes our children. Remember one thing: do not despair," he said.

Seminary to offer courses at MC, Broadmoor

NEW ORLEANS (Special) — New Orleans Seminary (NOBTS) will hold classes in two Mississippi locations this fall. Graduate courses will be held at Mississippi College (MC) in Clinton. Broadmoor Church at 1531 Highland Colony Parkway in Madison will host undergraduate courses.

Classes in Clinton and Madison will begin on August 23. All students who have not participated in New Student Orientation and Testing at the Clinton Center are required to attend on August 16 at 10 a.m. in AV1 room of the Learning Resource Center in the Mississippi College library. New students at Broadmoor Church will meet for orientation and testing on August 16 at 2 p.m.

Returning students for both centers must have all paperwork, with payment, in the office at NOBTS by August 17. New students can register the

first day of class. Students who have been out of classes for one year or less may apply for re-enrollment by attending the first class and completing the registration form. There is an additional \$10 fee for re-enrollment.

GRADUATE COURSES MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE

The following graduate-level courses are offered on Mondays at various times:

- History of Christianity I, two hours, 11 a.m.
- Basic Church and Education Administration, three hours, 2 p.m.
- Church Evangelism, three hours, 6 p.m.

For Southern Baptists, these courses cost \$160 per semester hour with a maximum of \$1,875, in addition to an— \$125 resource fee. For more information, contact Eric Pratt, program director, at (601) 956-7448 or by email at ep Pratt@mc.edu.

UNDERGRADUATE COURSES BROADMOOR CHURCH

The following undergraduate-level courses are offered on Mondays at various times:

- Personal Spiritual Disciplines, one hour, 12 p.m.
- Introduction to Preaching, three hours, 1 p.m.
- Marriage and Family Issues, three hours, 4 p.m.
- Teaching Methods, three hours, 7 p.m.

The following certificate courses are offered on Mondays at 7 p.m.

- Gospel of John, one hour, (first eight weeks of the semester)
- The Prophets, one hour, (second eight weeks of the semester)

For Southern Baptists, these courses cost \$150 per semester hour with a maximum of \$1,875, in addition to an \$125 resource fee.

Certificate course cost \$100 per semester hour. For more information, contact Julius Thompson, program director, at (601) 856-4341 or by email at Thompson.Julius@worldnet.att.net.

Through extension centers located all over the Southeast, NOBTS is pushing the campus out closer to the church field, making it possible for someone who may be in a ministry position to maintain that position and pursue theological education. Using non-traditional schedules and church-focused, competency-based curriculum, the extension centers provide training that encourages healthy churches.

For additional information about New Orleans Seminary's extension centers, contact Extension Center Office at (800) 514-1175 or visit online at www.nobts.edu/extensions.

YOU'RE FIRED!

Right up front let me confess that I have never seen the popular TV show, *The Apprentice*, with Donald Trump in which the words, "You are fired!" became so popular. It's not that I am against it because I don't know what it's all about. It's just that I don't get to watch that much TV and I really don't care for these weird and wacky, so-called reality TV shows!

As I understand it, the premise of the program is that all of these people want to work for and somewhat be like Donald Trump. Therefore, they work hard, put their best foot forward, and compete with others who also want to be Trump protégés. Trump then picks them off person by person and tells them, "You are fired!" Apparently, the rest of America has been watching and viewing ratings have been boosted up to the very top.

Spending the evening watching somebody get fired is not my idea of enjoyment or wise use of my time. As I understand it, the folks on the program have gone so far as to want to register the phrase "You are fired!" as though the show and/or Donald Trump owned them. Well, they have found out, they don't! In fact, I know a lot of churches who have dismissed their pastor and/or staff with about the same style and class as Donald Trump. Some have



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

even gone so far as simply to say, "You are fired!"

I know that there are times when a church must take action to let someone go because of a moral issue or an issue of destructive incompetence, but there are other times when action is taken that is unfair, unredemptive, and un-Christ like. The result of such action hurts a church, affects the community, and does damage to the family that may never be overcome. It is certainly not as easy to deal with as on the packaged TV show which has a beginning, an end, and some commercials sprinkled throughout.

There are problems related to whatever you do. If you feel like you must take action in order to protect the church, its children and youth, then that creates a dilemma. On the other hand, if you try to care for the minister and his family and protect them and their work and ministry, you may do harm to others. In part that is what the Catholic Church has been struggling with over the past number of years in the scandal within the church.

Let me offer a few suggestions that might be better for us as a church to use rather than "You are fired!" It might be good for us to think in terms of "You are being fired upon!" We could benefit from understanding that the church, the saints, and the soldiers are under attack from Satan. He does not want us to succeed and he would love to see the casualties of his work scattered across the landscape. The people of God are being fired upon as the Lord Himself is being attacked and every principle of Biblical truth and moral rightness is being chipped away. Every time I hear of some casualty of war in Iraq as a result of "friendly fire," I cringe. There is nothing friendly about "friendly fire." A bullet that is being shot to kill the enemy and kills one of your own is just as deadly. In the army of God, we need to be cautious that we don't go around destroying our own soldiers in the name of defending the faith.

Additionally, maybe we should give our attention to being "fired up!" Forget about being "fired or being

fired upon." We need to energize our people and be filled with the excitement, power, and fire of God as we seek to follow Him and serve Him. We need to get "fired up!"

It is not infrequent that you may see a ballgame — it could be basketball or football — where the commentators observe that one team is not playing at their best. They just don't seem to have their heart in it and they just seem to be going through the motions. You can't win games that way and you certainly can't be triumphant champions with a lackadaisical, lethargic, "who cares?" attitude.

The church will never be all that God wants it to be and we will not reach our world unless we have a passion, a drive, and an energy that flows through every cell and corpuscle of the Body of Christ. The church needs to get "fired up." Too often, rather than charging into the work with hearts on fire and a passion that drives us, we enter into the work of God with our foot on the brake and our water hoses ready to put out any potential spiritual blaze that may be ignited.

May the God of Heaven visit us with fire from above so that all of us might be "fired up" to do our greatest work for Him in these days.

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YKFADIEO NGTXEAOW

KG BN WIDCSVZ XE OWI

MKTTSHN SM OWI MXICF.

WSNIB OIE: MSKT

Clue: Z = K

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Amos 3:4

Billy Kim, Korean choir to tour Mississippi

CLINTON, Miss. (Special) — Mississippi College (MC) and the MC International Program announce the Mississippi appearance of renowned Korean pastor Billy Kim and the Korean Baptist Children's Choir's in their 2004 U.S. visit. Kim will preach and the Choir and Orchestra will perform during their August 7-8 tour of the state.

Kim is pastor of 15,000 member Suwon Central Baptist Church in Suwon, Korea, as well as president of the Far East Broadcasting Company in Korea. Kim is also director of Christian Service, Inc., in Korea, and Chaplain of the Korean National Police. He is the founder of Central Christian Academy Suwon and Capital Bible College and Seminary in Korea.

In his dedication and passion for evangelism, Kim has preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ all over the world to thousands of people in all walks of life, including military personnel, diplomats, university professors, faculty and staff, and missionaries.

Also featured during the two-day visit is the Korean Baptist Children's Choir and

Orchestra. They have performed on Christian radio and television in Korea and at international concerts during the past twelve years. They have appeared throughout the United States, in Argentina, Australia, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Thailand, Singapore, and at the Jerusalem 2000 International Music Festival.

They are led by Tom Song, minister of music at Suwon Central Baptist Church. Kang Il Lee, Maestro, directs the Korean Children's

Orchestra. At 8 a.m. on August 7, Rosemary Aultman, mayor of the City of Clinton, will host a Prayer Breakfast in Anderson Hall in the B. C. Rogers Student Center. Kim will speak and the Korean Baptist Children's Choir will sing.

The breakfast will be followed by the annual prayer walk for Clinton schools. There is no charge for admission and the event is open to the public. Call (601) 925-3235 for more information. See www.clintonprayerwalk.com for more information.

At 6 p.m. on August 7, the Arts Council of Clinton will host an Arts Kick-Off silent auction event, featuring the Korean Children's Choir and

Orchestra in concert. There is no charge for admission and the event is open to the public. Call (601) 925-3235 for more information.

On August 8, Kim will preach at both the 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. worship services at Parkway Church in Clinton. MC will present an honorary doctorate to Tom Song, minister of music at the Suwon Baptist Church in Korea.

At 6:00 p.m. on August 8, the Korean Baptist Church Children's Choir will sing during the evening worship service at First Church, Jackson. Kim will preach at 6:30 p.m. at Highland Colony Church, Ridgeland. Both events are open to the public.



Kim



Korean Children's Choir



Korean Children's Orchestra

JUST FOR THE RECORD

Beulah Memorial Church, Bolton, held a groundbreaking in the early spring. Pictured are church members celebrating the beginning of the site work.

Children from First Church, Cleveland, recently attended state bible drill in Batesville. Participants pictured (from left, front) are Abigail Bufkin, Rachel Fuller, (back) Mary Frances Martin, Zach Pinkerton, and Margaux Joe. The leader is Cerise Barrett.

Crestwood Church, Booneville, held VBS June 7-11 with an average of 68 nightly. Two decisions were made.

Frank Pevey, missionary to Africa, spoke to **Vaiden Church, Vaiden**, June 27 at the morning worship service. Bobby Turbeville and the Praise Team presented music.

The **By His Grace Group** of Benton Church, Benton, hosted their monthly senior adult luncheon on July 20 at 11:30 a.m. The featured speaker was **Wayland Hamlin**, new pastor of Benton United Methodist Church. **Charles Moore** is the pastor.

Mount Comfort Church, Bruce, recently purchased and delivered 20 new mattress sets to **Reedy Acres**, a division of The Baptist Children's Village, in Water Valley. The group also

delivered sheets, comforters, and grocery supplies.

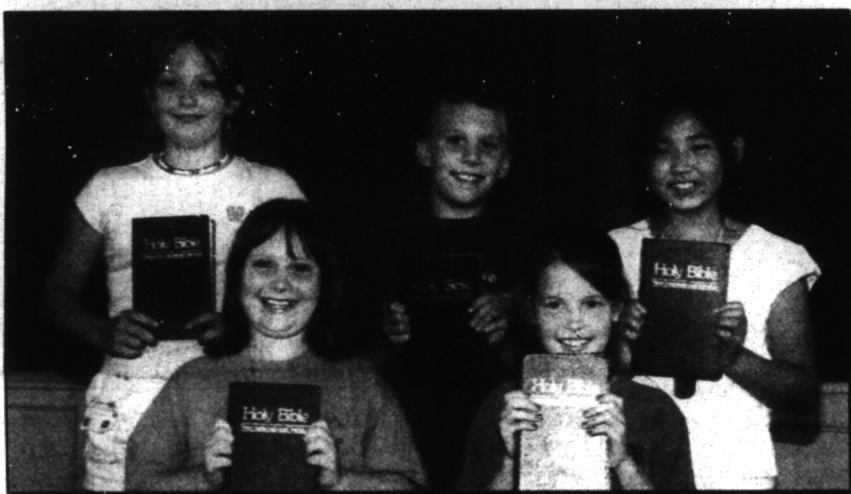
Crossroads Church, Decatur, recently held VBS. Offerings were sent to the International Bible Society-Operation Kid to

Kid which provides bibles to Spanish speaking children.

Unity Church, Georgetown, held VBS recently with an average attendance of 143 with 107 having perfect attendance.



Beulah Memorial Groundbreaking, Bolton



Bible Drill Participants of First Church, Cleveland

STAFF CHANGES

First Church, Vicksburg, has called **Matt Buckles** as pastor.

He previously served as Director of Pastor & Leadership Development for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, Jackson.

New Sight Church, Brookhaven, has called **Jeremy Scott** as part time minister of youth. He attended NOBTS.

Eastlawn Church, Pascagoula, called **David Eldridge** as pastor. His first sermon was July 11. Eldridge attends NOBTS. He previously served churches in Clinton, Florence, and Birmingham, Ala.

Center Church, Blue Springs, called **Charles Hodger** as pastor effective July 3. He comes from Agape Church, Memphis, Tenn.

Britt Johnson has been called as minister of youth at **Barton Church, Lucedale**. Johnston will begin seminary in the fall. **James Sanders** is pastor.

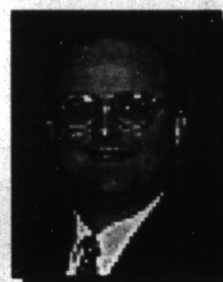
Beacon Church, Hattiesburg, welcomed **Kyle Jones** as pastor June 2. Jones and his family are from the Pistol Ridge community.

Lane Bass of First Church, McLaurin, recently accepted the call as youth director.

James M. "Jay" Parker III has accepted the position of music and youth director at **Poplar Springs Church, Mendenhall**, effective July 13. **Jack Woodard** is the Pastor.

Parker was formerly the associate pastor and music director for **Pine Forest Church, Collinsville**.

Rome Church, Rome, has called **Michael Mitchell** as pastor effective immediately. Mitchell is a resident of the Rome community. He has served Rome as interim for the last eight months.



Buckles



Eldridge



Parker

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- Mon. August 16 1-5 & 6:30 - 8:30 pm Batesville, FBC 662-563-7439
- Tues. August 17 1-5 & 6:30 - 8:30 pm Tupelo, East Heights 662-566-1700
- Thur. August 19 1-5 & 6:30 - 8:30 pm Madison, FBC 601-362-8676
- Mon. August 23 1-5 & 6:30 - 8:30 pm Laurel, FBC 601-649-8114
- Tues. August 24 1-5 & 6:30 - 8:30 pm Brookhaven, FBC 601-833-8111

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COLLEGE AND SEMINARY NEWS

Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., held its commencement service May 14 in Alumni Memorial Chapel. R. Albert Mohler, Jr., president, delivered the address. The following graduates have local ties: Robert N. Chambers, Jr., Colonial Heights Church, Jackson, Master of Divinity; Derek K. Hudson, Meadowood Church, Amory, Master of Divinity in Church Music; and Max O. Sturdivant, Jr., Temple Heights Church, Oxford, Doctor of Education.

Donnis South, Franklin Church, Flora, graduated from Reformed Theological Seminary, Jackson, May 14. He received his Doctor of Ministry degree.

Ellen Cone, former member of Morrison Heights Church,

Clinton, and currently serving with the NAMB, received her Master of Religious Education degree from the Canadian Southern Baptist Seminary, Cochrane, Alberta, Canada, in May. Richard Blackaby is president.



Prather

William Carey College on the Coast will hold commencement exercises August 7 at 4:30 p.m. at First Church, Gulfport. Reginald Sykes, vice president at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College Jefferson Davis campus, will serve as guest speaker. Cloyd Ezell, vice president of academic affairs, will present candidates



Smith



Oliver

and Larry Kennedy, president, will confer degrees.

The Mississippi College Honors Day Convocation was recently held in A.E. Wood Coliseum, Clinton, with a host of students recognized for their academic achievements and service to the University. The Scott-Swor Founders Award was awarded to **Waymon Alan Oliver**, Hamilton, majoring in Christian Studies and Philosophy. **Joseph Michael Hickner**, Laurel, received both the Alpha Chi Scholar Male Athlete of the Year and the Outstanding Senior in Political Science award.

Scott Prather, Clinton, received both the Miles Dampeer Memorial Scholarship, given to the top graduate in Christian Studies and Philosophy major, and a Perry Academic Award, a certificate given in the field of Religion. **Thomas Bennett Smith**, Forest, received the Omicron Delta Kappa Freshman Man of the Year Award. Receiving the Student Body Award for the Mortar Board Freshman Woman of the Year was **Stacie Renee Stokley**, Morton, majoring in Psychology. **Marie Elizabeth Roper**, Flowood, received a Student

Body Award, the Jones/Eichelberger Representative of the Year Award.

Mississippi College named **Bill Stark**, Professor of Biological Sciences and Clinton resident, Distinguished Professor of the Year 2004 in May. Stark received degrees from Southeastern Oklahoma State University, North Texas State University, and University of Utah. Pictured are Stark and Lee Royce, president.



Hickner

William Carey College student, **Jason Meaux**, Hattiesburg, was awarded the Rotary Ambassadorial Fellowship, according to the Rotary Foundation of Rotary International. The scholarship will allow Meaux, a master of secondary education major, to attend any school in the world for one year. He chose the University of Canterbury in Christ Church, New Zealand, where he will study foreign policy and international relations.

Mary Stewart, Hattiesburg, was recently named dean of the Joseph and Nancy Fail School of Nursing at William Carey College. Stewart, who also serves as associate professor of nursing, began teaching at WCC in 2000.

Paul Cotten, professor of psychology and music therapy at William Carey College, was honored by the dedication of a building at Ellisville State School where Cotten served as facility director from 1971-1984. Approximately 125 people attended the dedication and renaming of the Lake View Unit to the Paul D. Cotton, Sr. Intermediate Care Facility for the Mentally Retarded.



Meaux

On May 26 a class of 17 graduated at Unity Church, Jones Association, completing the first course, Understanding the Bible, taught by Tommy Mangum. This course was offered through the Seminary Extension program, known as the Christian Development Center.



Stokley

The Board of Directors for the Biloxi Regional Medical Center Foundation presented a \$70,000 check to the nursing program at William Carey College, Gulfport campus. The Foundation also committed \$10,000 to the Carey Corporate Partners Program. The gift will be used as seed money for a new nursing building and for faculty development, master's program scholarships, and technological equipment.



Roper



William Carey College Nursing Program, Gulfport



Christian Center Graduates of Unity Church, Laurel



Lee Royce, president of MC and Bill Stark

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COLLEGE AND SEMINARY NEWS

Tommy King, dean of graduate admissions at William Carey College, has been selected as a member of the faculty of the District Governor's School for



King

Lions Clubs International to be held in Dearborn, Mich. This is the first time a Mississippi Lion has been chosen for this prestigious faculty.

A goal of **Blue Mountain College's BSU** is to visit the countries where former BMC students are currently working. This summer BSU members participated in a mission

trip to Kyrgyzstan to work with graduate Jessica Marshall. Pictured (from left) are Teddy James, Brandon Powell, Chris Douglas, Christian Johnson, BSU Director Tracy Moser, Lisa Amburn, and Nicole Morris.

led to Slovenia during their Italian Spring Tour. The singers participated in the Celje Baptist Church worship service the Sunday of their tour. They also presented a concert in the Maribor city park.

The **Mississippi College Singers**, under the direction of James Meaders, recently trav-

www.mbc.org

JUST FOR THE RECORD

Union Church, Roxie, will hold a gospel sing featuring The Next Generation August 21 at 7 p.m. Carl Evans is pastor. For more information, call (601) 384-2066.

New Sight Church, Brookhaven, will have Super Sunday August 15 with a high attendance emphasis. Lunch will be served and a gospel singing will follow. A building fund offering will be taken for renovations.

Shiloh Church, Carroll Association, will hold a note-burning praise service August 15 at 2 p.m. George Smith, DOM, Carroll-Montgomery Association, and Doug Warren, pastor, will lead the service. Everyone is welcome.

McLaurin Heights Church, Pearl, will hold Days of Grace and Glory every Sunday in

August with special preaching and music. Testify will be in concert August 9. J. Steve Jackson is pastor.

New Life Fellowship Church, Oakland, will host a gospel singing August 14 at 7 p.m. featuring Ann Downing. Downing, originally from Bruce, is a regular on the Gaither Video series. Jerry W. Smith is pastor. All are invited. For more information, call (662) 623-0009.



Blue Mountain College BSU



MC Choir

First Baptist Church of Pearl Ladies Night Out

August 13th @ 6:30 pm

- \$12 individual/\$10 for groups of 10 or more
- Mix and Mingle with coffee & dessert afterwards.
- For tickets call the church office 601-939-4476

Limited seating, so get your tickets today!

Anita Renfro

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10:30 am Worship service in the sanctuary
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MBF

THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST FOUNDATION

Calvary, Scott County: Revival August 1-4; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Don Savell, evangelist; Johnny Barfield, music; Hilah Stubbs, pianist; Martin Williams, pastor.

First, McLaurin: Homecoming and Revival August 1-4; Sunday, 11 a.m. with lunch and fellowship to follow; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Frank Harmon, MBCB, guest speaker; John and Lydean Hubbell, music; Roy C. Moody, pastor.

Wheeler Grove, Corinth: Revival August 1-4; Sunday, 6:30 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; nightly singing; Danny Lanier, Meridian, preaching; nursery provided; Kara Blackard, pastor.

Magee's Creek, Jayess: Homecoming August 8; worship, 11 a.m.; dinner will be served; music, 1:30 p.m.; Dale Sauls, preaching; The New Life Singers, music.

Goodwater, Smith County: Revival August 1-4; Sunday, 10 a.m., a pot-luck lunch will follow, and 1:30 p.m.; weeknights, 7 p.m.; Sidney Davis, guest speaker; Joy Thornton, leading singing; Wayne Thornton, pianist; Roger Barnes, pastor; all are invited.

Fernwood, Gulfport: Homecoming August 8; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; dinner at noon, praise and worship, 1:30 p.m.; Charles Gibbs, former pastor, preaching; all are welcome; Jim Kultau, pastor.

Pine Grove, Picayune: Revival August 8-11; Sunday, 11 a.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Jim Futral, MBCB, evangelist; Daniel Lee, First, Picayune, music; Reggie Bridges, pastor; for more information, call (601) 798-3645.

Whitesand, Prentiss: Homecoming August 8; worship, 10:30 a.m.; lunch at noon; afternoon songfest; Charles Burnham, preaching; Rick Holifield, music; all are welcome.

Sardis, Smith County: Homecoming and Revival August 1-4; Sunday, 10:30 a.m., lunch at noon, and an afternoon sing will follow; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Walter Butler, preaching; Macon Phillips, guest evangelist; Ray Gates, music; Scott Mangum, pastor.

Society Hill, Oakvale: Old Fashion Homecoming and Revival August 1-6; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.; John Haines, evangelist; Billy Paul Cooper, minister of music; Tommy Broom, pastor.

Pine Grove, Union: Revival August 1-4; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Paul Blanchard, evangelist; Jerry Murphy, music; Gilbert Allan, pastor.

Mantee, Mantee: Centennial Celebration September 2006; anyone associated with Mantee is asked to share experiences and pictures; address all communication to Virginia Skelton, c/o Mantee Baptist Church, P.O. Box 161, Mantee, MS 39751 or call (662) 456-4195.

Concord, Yazoo City: Revival August 1-4; Sunday, 11 a.m., covered dish meal at noon, and afternoon service; Mon.-Wed., 7:30 p.m.; Harold T. Bryson, Mississippi College, guest speaker; John Yates, Enterprise Ala., music; James F. Yates, pastor; for more information, call (662) 746-2540.

Enterprise, Amite County: Revival August 1-4; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Gene Douglas, evangelist; Gary Van Norman, music; Ernest Whittington, pastor.

Little Bahala, Wesson: Homecoming and Revival August 8-11; Sunday, 10 a.m., 11 a.m., lunch will be served, and afternoon singing will follow; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Singing Mississippians, McCall Creek, singing; Howard Smith, Lake Braun, La., guest speaker; Thomas and Willa Moak, music.

Crooked Creek, Silver Creek: Homecoming August 1; Sunday School, 10 p.m.; preaching, 11 a.m.; a covered dish lunch will be served; Emond White, preaching; His Praise, Brookhaven, music; Robert Dunn, pastor; all are invited.

Providence, Grenada: Revival August 1-4; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Robert Clark, Scott Hudson, Neil Gant, and Fletcher Moorman, speakers; Don Montgomery and Tena Taylor, music; Harvey Springer, pastor.

Linwood, Union: Homecoming August 22; worship, 11 a.m.; a covered dish lunch will follow; Jerry Henderson, guest speaker; all are welcome.

Unity, Georgetown: Revival August 6-8; Fri.-Sat., 7 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m. and meal will be served after each service; Gene

Erwin, Harrisville, guest speaker; Ray Gates, Puckett, music; Jerome McLendon, pastor.

Bethlehem, Morton: Revival August 1-4; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Don Wilson, Harperville, guest speaker; Tal and Cindy Vardaman, Line Creek, music; Stephen Lanier, pastor.

Salem Baptist, Raymond: Homecoming and Revival August 8-11; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Chris Goolsby, leading worship; Joey Williams, leading music; all are invited; for more information, call (601) 885-9668.

New Henleyfield, Carriere: Revival August 20-22; Fri. and Sat., 7 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m.; Brian Upshaw, guest preacher; Blake Shaw, pastor; for more information, call (601) 798-2267.

Cedar View, Olive Branch: Homecoming August 8; Bible Study, 9:45 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; potluck luncheon at noon; gospel concert, 1 p.m.; Paul Brown, speaker.

Hebron, Jones County: Revival August 1-4; 7 p.m. nightly; Shannon Marshall, Steep Hollow, Pearl River Association, evangelist; David Young, Laurel, music; Tommy Davis, pastor.

New Hope, Lee County: August 1-4; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Ken Cooper, guest speaker; Jeff Chamblee, music; Lowell Johnson, host pastor.

Pilgrims Rest, Crystal Springs: Revival August 5-8; 7 p.m. nightly; Sunday, 10:30 a.m. with dinner on the grounds following; Joel Haire, Crystal Springs, evangelist; Wayne Pierce and area musicians, music; Johnnie Stewart, pastor.

Valley Park, Valley Park: Homecoming August 1; worship, 11 a.m.; dinner will follow; Robert Gilliland, preaching; all are invited.



Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. *(I have sinned.)*
 2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. *(I repent.)*
 3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. *(I believe in Jesus.)*
 4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. *(I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)*
- But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name *(John 1:12).*

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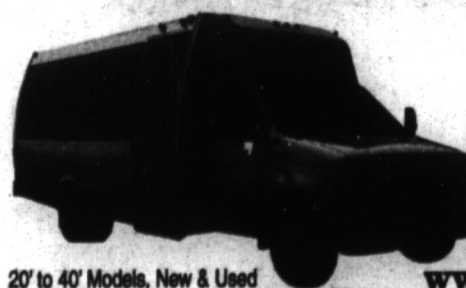
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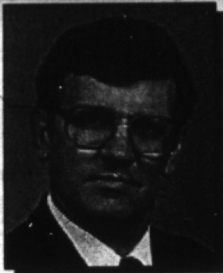
THE PASTORAL SEARCH COMMITTEE representing Montgomery Baptist Church, Lincoln County, Miss., does hereby request resumes to fill the full-time position of pastor. Please give education and previous pastoral experience. Please mail resumes to David Moak, chairman, 3584 Hesper Moak Lane SW, Summit, MS 39666 or email cjre@elepak.net. Call (601) 276-9209.

MERIDIAN AREA CHURCH seeks part-time or bi-vocational minister of music. Please send resume to Union B.C. committee, 159 Hwy 514, Meridian, MS 39301.

PART-TIME/FULL-TIME MINISTER of students position. Send resumes to Grace Memorial Baptist Church, Minister of students search committee, 2412 23rd Avenue, Gulfport, MS 39501.

NAMES IN THE NEWS

Nelson Crozier is available for revivals, pulpit supply, and to serve as interim pastor. He can be reached at 22 Apple Cove, Petal, MS 39465, (601) 582-9447, or (601) 408-5269.



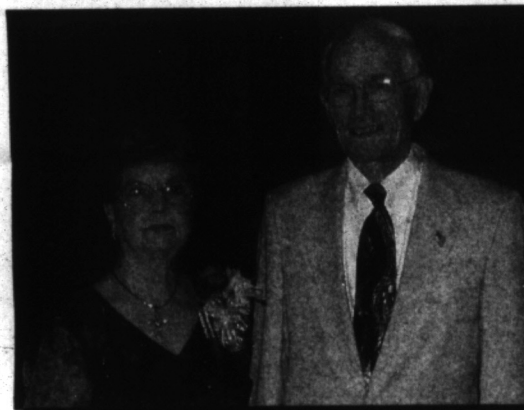
Crozier

Jerry Bishop and his wife **Charlotte** were presented with a plaque for their 40 years of serving in the ministry. Bishop has served churches in Neshoba, Kemper, Leake, Lincoln, Clarke, and Holmes counties and is pastor at First Church, Lauderdale.



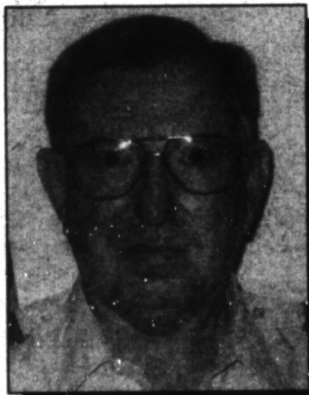
Jerry and Charlotte Bishop

On June 30 **Christine Brewer** retired after serving for 37 years as church secretary at East End Church, Columbus. She was honored with a reception and gifts. Brewer is pictured here with her husband, **Bob**, a life deacon.



Christine & Bob Brewer

Beulah Memorial Church, Bolton, recently ordained three new deacons. **Larry Garner**, Director of Education, Metro Baptist Association, and **Paul Jones**, pastor, led in the service. Pictured (from left) are Garner, **Bobbie** and **Joe Rees**, **Harry** and **Frances Douglas**, **Larry** and **Carol Raborn** with **Rachel** and **Elizabeth**, and **Jones**.



Simmons

Chaplain Lt. Colonel O. Errol Simmons has been named Wing Chaplain of the Mississippi Wing of the Civil Air Patrol, the official Auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force. As Headquarters Chaplain, he will coordinate the work of the chaplains and moral leadership officers in the thirteen squadrons of the Mississippi Wing and minister to the Wing Staff. Simmons is an Emeritus Missionary of the IMB and currently is an adjunct professor of religion at the USM. He is a member of University Church, Hattiesburg.



Michael Rowell and Robbie Howard



Mylvia Williamson

First Church, Natchez, voted **Paul Green** to serve as deacon emeritus October 26. Green has been a member since 1949. Pictured (from left) are **Bill Hurt**, pastor, **Green**, and his wife **Bernice**.



Bill Hurt, pastor and Paul & Bernice Green

Poplar Springs Church, Mendenhall, ordained **Duane Fewell**, **William Noland**, **Chris Baeuerle**, and **Buster Shows** June 6. Pictured (from right, front) are **Fewell**, **Noland**, **Baeuerle**, (back) **Shows**, and **Jack Woodard**, pastor.



Deacons and Families of Beulah Church, Bolton

First Church of Helena, Moss Point, licensed **Michael Rowell** to the ministry. He is the grandson of the pastor, **Robbie Howard**. Rowell serves as associate pastor of outreach and youth at Higher Ground Church, Irvington, Ala.

Perfect attendance recognition was given to **Mylvia Williamson** (pictured) by **Teresa Magee**, VBS Director, for Shiloh Church, Foxworth. Williamson was the oldest student attending VBS. She has taught children and youth classes for over fifty years.



Deacons of Poplar Springs Church, Mendenhall

Hurricane Creek Church, Sandy Hook, honored **Dovie Sue Germany** for over 50 years of service through organ music with a plaque and a dozen roses June 13. **Curtis Roland** is pastor.



Curtis Rowland and Dovie Sue Germany

Plainway Church, Laurel, ordained three new deacons May 23. Pictured (from left) are **J. Nonnie Jefcoat**, pastor, **Odus Windham**, **Emery Hill**, and **Decker Freeman**.



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS



Deacons of Plainway Church, Laurel

FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

Know Jesus

John 1:40-42; Mt 4:18-20; 14:25-33

By Mo Baker

What's important for a person to experience success in life? A casual glance at TV infomercials will reveal numerous products, strategies, books, machines, and philosophies that one may embrace in the hope of achieving a modicum of accomplishment. Sadly, countless individuals spend money and time committed to realizing earthly success with little or no thought of spiritual attainment.

The August lessons focus on helping Christians embrace godly principles for success as modeled by Peter, one of Jesus' closest disciples. Peter's imperfections notwithstanding, his life is an example for believers who want to succeed in things of greatest importance. Let's commit ourselves to discovering and living by God's truths as we concentrate on the Bible's perspec-

tives for success. Our journey into Peter's principles begins as we dedicate ourselves to knowing Jesus.

I. BE CHANGED BY JESUS (JOHN 1:40-42)

Whether out of curiosity or belief in his brother Andrew, Peter went to see Jesus. What happened next to Peter altered the course of his entire life and eternal destiny. In the presence of Jesus, Peter experienced a new purpose for living. John's gospel tells us that Jesus looked at Peter, calling him by his given name, Simon. Jesus indicated that Peter's new designation would be "Cephas" (John 1:42), the Greek transliteration of the Aramaic word kepha, which meant "rock." Simon's new nickname, "Peter," apparently fit him so well that his given name was seldom used afterwards. Jesus saw in Peter one who would be an

important leader of the early church. The name change was not only literal, but also symbolic of the kind of change Jesus would begin making in Peter's life. Despite Peter's past lifestyle, Jesus was willing to use him in His ministry. Christians can follow Peter's example and be willing to come to Jesus as they are, not waiting until they can change themselves in hopes of being acceptable to God. Only Jesus can make an eternal change sufficient to redirect a person's life and destiny.

II. FOLLOW JESUS (MT 4:18-20)

Matthew's account depicts Jesus walking the vicinity of Capernaum, finding two brothers (Andrew and Peter) who are fishermen and commands them to follow Him. Both Andrew and Peter had already encountered Jesus when Andrew was a disciple of John the Baptist. The customary method of becoming a disciple of a rabbi was for a person to choose which rabbi he would follow. In Matthew, the

custom is reversed as Jesus chooses Andrew and Peter to become His disciples. To be a disciple was to be an adherent or devoted follower of a given teacher, as well as becoming an intimate companion in some endeavor. Jesus extended Andrew and Peter an invitation to leave their profession of catching fish and enter a new vocation of fishing for souls. Matthew records that Andrew and Peter immediately abandoned their nets and became disciples of Jesus. Likewise, contemporary believers are challenged daily by the Holy Spirit to abandon their self-interests and worldly ambitions and follow Jesus wholeheartedly. Responding in faith to Jesus opens the door for becoming a disciple of the Lord.

III. KNOW JESUS (MT 14:25-33)

Some time later in the lives of Peter and the other disciples, Jesus instructed them to enter a boat and steer to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. While Jesus went off to pray, the disciples experienced a storm, causing them to make little progress on their journey. After several hours,

apparently between 3:00 and 6:00 a.m., the disciples see Jesus walking on the water, perceiving Him to be a ghost. Sensing their fear, Jesus commanded them to be courageous as He identified Himself. Peter then asks Jesus for the power to duplicate the Lord's miracle of walking on water. When Jesus invited Peter to walk to Him, Peter stepped out of the boat and began walking until he became fearful, causing him to start sinking. Jesus reached out and saved Peter, rebuking his doubt. As they enter the boat, the storm stops and the disciples verbally express their confidence that Jesus is God's Son. Through such a difficult circumstance, the disciples learned that Jesus can be trusted. Truly, disciples of Jesus have no need to fear when facing danger as a result of His commands. As we obey Jesus, we will become more certain of His identity in our lives. Intimate knowledge of Jesus is what disciples need to succeed in their walk with God.

Baker is BSU Director at the University of Mississippi in Oxford.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Trapped by Sin

2 Kings 16-17

By Mary Carraway

AHAZ (2 KINGS 16, 2 CHRONICLES 28)

In Judah, Ahab, son of Jotham, began to reign. Most kings of Judah are commended for doing what was right. Ahab was characterized as an evil man and compared to the kings of Israel. He participated in idolatrous practices, bought the protection of the king of Assyria with silver and gold from the temple, replaced the bronze altar with a copy of a pagan altar, and dismantled the temple. One significance of this is that Uriah the priest did nothing to stop him. What a tragic state of worship that revealed!

THE DOWNFALL: BONDAGE (2 KINGS 17:5-6)

Hoshea was the final king to govern Israel. Although he was the least wicked of all the kings of

Israel, the stockpile of Israel's sins had been growing for years. Israel's final descent into destruction came at the hands of Shalmanezar V of Assyria in the ninth year of Hoshea's reign. Hoshea failed to pay the yearly tribute to Assyria, and, ironically, appealed to Egypt for help. Shalmanezar invaded the land, besieged Samaria for three years, and finally captured it. Israel suffered not just defeat, but deportation. Over 27,000 Israelites were carried to Assyria.

After just two centuries (931-722 B.C.) the Northern Kingdom of Israel ceased to exist. Of her twenty kings, seven had been assassinated and all were judged evil. Bondage to sin did not come overnight. The Israelites had been progressively losing their freedom beginning with their failure to destroy all the peoples within the borders of

Canaan (Deut. 7:16), continuing with their demand for a king, and, finally, dividing the kingdom which resulted in the worship of forbidden gods at forbidden places. The Assyrians did not destroy Israel; Israel destroyed Israel.

Carraway

THE REASON: DISOBEDIENCE (2 KINGS 17:7-12)

This passage, with a scathing catalogue of Israel's sins, clearly reveals why Israel fell. Captivity came very simply because "the people of Israel had sinned against the Lord their God" (v. 7). Their sins ran the gamut from ingratitude for deliverance from Egypt to the idolatrous worship of golden calves to the abominable practices of the Canaanites. The high places, the sacred pillars, and the Asherah poles were almost everywhere in Israel. A nation designed to be unique forfeited God's blessings to live according to the customs of the nations before and beside them. "Still the Lord warned" (v. 13) points to a God of mercy who withheld their deserved punishment and a God of grace who

reached out through his prophets to warn them.

WORSHIP GOD ONLY (2 KINGS 17:16-20)

The indictment against Israel is summed up very concisely. "They abandoned all the commandments of the Lord their God" (v. 16). What were the commandments they had abandoned? "Do not have other gods besides Me" (Exodus 20:3). Israel's sin was not that they didn't worship God, but that they didn't worship Him exclusively. They did not worship Him with ALL their hearts, souls, and minds. Instead they assimilated into their worship the practices of the nations around them. They had broken covenant with a jealous God who will not share worship with idols.

Verses 18 is perhaps one of the saddest verses in this text. "He removed them from His presence." Nothing can be added to make this statement more intense. Meditate on the significance of being "removed from the presence of God."

Of the twelve tribes to whom God had given the

Promised Land, only Judah (which included the small tribe of Simeon) remained. The destruction of the Northern Kingdom should have been a strong deterrent, but "even Judah did not keep the commandments of the Lord their God...." (v. 19). Eventually God rejected all of the descendants of Jacob and handed them over to the plunderers of Assyria and Babylon, "banished from his presence" (v. 20).

Many are the idols Americans also worship: success, security, pleasure, appearance, political correctness. Child sacrifice is allowed every day in this nation. Our Asherah poles and high places can be found on the Internet, TV, and movies. We must come back to a worship of God that is a lifestyle, not a service on Sunday morning. Nothing held back, nothing shared. God alone must be the object of our worship, the source of our obedience, and the focus of our faithfulness. Pray that we will not be banished from His presence.

Carraway is member of First Church, Wiggins.

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The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

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Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

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All news items are subject to editing.

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THE BAPTIST
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Mississippi Baptist Youth Night

July 23, 2004 — Mississippi Coliseum, Jackson

